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Internal migration in Canada from 2012/2013 to 2014/2015

by François Sergerie

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..	not available for a specific reference period
...	not applicable
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0^s	value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
^{p}	preliminary
^{r}	revised
x	suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
^{E}	use with caution
F	too unreliable to be published
*	significantly different from reference category ($p < 0.05$)

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Internal migration in Canada from 2012/2013 to 2014/2015

by François Sergerie, Demography Division

Highlights

- From 2012/2013 to 2014/2015, Alberta and British Columbia were the main provinces to gain from interprovincial migration in Canada.
- In relative terms, the Atlantic provinces, with the exception of Newfoundland and Labrador, had the biggest migratory losses, especially to Alberta.
- The biggest migration flows were from Ontario to Western Canada and within Western Canada provinces.
- In 2013/2014, three census metropolitan areas (CMA) from Western Canada showed net internal migration rates above 10 per thousand: Kelowna, Edmonton and Calgary.
- The Toronto census metropolitan area (CMA) recorded sizable losses in intraprovincial migration to the other CMAs in southern Ontario.

Key statistics

Number of interprovincial migrants:
2012/2013: 261,300 migrants
2013/2014: 275,100 migrants
2014/2015: 283,800 migrants

Interprovincial migration rates:
2012/2013: 7.5 per thousand
2013/2014: 7.8 per thousand
2014/2015: 8.0 per thousand

Provinces with the highest net interprovincial migration (2014/2015):
1 – Alberta (+21,600 migrants)
2 – British Columbia (+20,400 migrants)
3 – Newfoundland and Labrador (+200 migrants)

Provinces with the lowest net interprovincial migration (2014/2015):
1 – Quebec (-16,100 migrants)
2 – Ontario (-8,700 migrants)
3 – Manitoba (-6,700 migrants)

Census metropolitan areas with the highest net internal migration (2013/2014):
1 – Edmonton (+19,200 migrants)
2 – Calgary (+14,600 migrants)
3 – Victoria (+3,400 migrants)

Census metropolitan areas with the lowest net internal migration (2013/2014):
1 – Toronto (-27,700 migrants)
2 – Montréal (-14,000 migrants)
3 – Winnipeg (-4,000 migrants)

This article analyzes the most recent internal migration trends in Canada. The analysis is based mostly on final data from 2012/2013 to 2014/2015 (July 1 to June 30). A short section also gives an overview of preliminary data for 2015/2016. These data are subject to revision and should be interpreted with caution. For the analysis of census metropolitan areas (CMAs), the most recent final data available are for the 2013/2014 period.

Internal migration represents all movements of people within Canada's geographical boundaries, involving a change in usual place of residence. It denotes movements of people from one province or territory to another (interprovincial migration) or from one region to another within the same province or territory (intraprovincial migration).

This article is divided into sections based on the following indicators: net interprovincial migration, interprovincial flows of in-migrants and out-migrants, age and sex structure of interprovincial migrants, and internal migration between CMAs.

Data source

The interprovincial migration estimates used for this article are from Statistics Canada's Population Estimates Program. Since no mechanism exists to record interprovincial migratory movement in Canada, Statistics Canada produces these estimates using the T1 Family file (T1FF), an administrative data file composed of the individual T1 and T4 tax files, and the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) file received from the Canada Revenue Agency. These data are used to estimate migrants by comparing the addresses on personal income tax returns over two consecutive tax years. Additional information on the methodology is available in the publication *Population and Family Estimation Methods at Statistics Canada*, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 91-528-X.

Net interprovincial migration

Net interprovincial migration represents the difference between in-migrants and out-migrants for a given province or territory. It can be presented as either a number or a rate.

In Canada, the number of interprovincial migrants rose slightly in recent years, from 261,300 in 2012/2013 to 275,100 in 2013/2014 and then 283,800 in 2014/2015. The national interprovincial migration rate also rose during these same periods, from 7.5 per thousand to 7.8 per thousand, and then 8.0 per thousand.

Net interprovincial migration for the period 2014/2015 was negative in seven provinces and two territories. The lowest net interprovincial migrations were recorded in the central provinces of Quebec (-16,100) and Ontario (-8,700). However, because of their large populations, the net interprovincial migration rates of Quebec (-2.0 per thousand) and Ontario (-0.6 per thousand) were only slightly negative. Thus, while these provinces had substantial losses in absolute numbers, interprovincial migration had only a limited negative influence on their population growth (Table 1 and Figure 1).

Even though their net interprovincial migration numbers and rates are similar, Ontario and Quebec differed considerably in their migratory dynamics in 2014/2015. Ontario was a major hub of interprovincial migration, with very sizable numbers of in-migrants and out-migrants. Of Canada's provinces and territories, Ontario had the second largest number of in-migrants (62,900) and the largest number of out-migrants (71,600). Proportionally, the frequency of interprovincial migration was lower in Quebec. The number of in-migrants there was 3.8 times lower than in Ontario (16,600) and the number of out-migrants was 2.2 times lower (32,800). This is due in part to the fact that traditionally, francophone Quebecers have exceptionally low interprovincial migration rates (Finnie 2000).

Table 1

Net interprovincial migration of provinces and territories, Canada, 2006/2007 to 2015/2016

Period	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.	Total number of migrants
	number													
2006/2007	-4,067	-849	-4,126	-2,632	-12,865	-20,047	-5,500	1,549	33,809	15,005	101	-221	-157	305,062
2007/2008	-528	-291	-1,794	-908	-11,682	-14,750	-3,703	4,171	15,317	14,643	235	-420	-290	301,237
2008/2009	1,877	-536	-751	-237	-7,419	-15,601	-3,111	2,983	13,184	9,995	228	-577	-35	277,846
2009/2010	1,558	60	612	571	-3,258	-4,662	-2,412	2,153	-3,271	8,728	325	-351	-53	259,234
2010/2011	30	-210	-41	-158	-4,763	-4,007	-3,517	545	8,443	3,421	363	-179	73	257,085
2011/2012	545	-618	-2,866	-1,806	-6,915	-10,611	-4,212	1,878	27,652	-2,711	313	-496	-153	280,347
2012/2013	495	-901	-3,517	-3,290	-10,431	-13,901	-5,006	392	38,598	-1,868	-94	-482	5	261,295
2013/2014	234	-941	-2,571	-3,517	-14,312	-14,564	-6,851	-1,839	35,382	9,475	51	-488	-59	275,059
2014/2015	161	-682	-2,311	-2,790	-16,142	-8,695	-6,678	-4,528	21,594	20,379	87	-223	-172	283,809
2015/2016	271	-729	-1,034	-2,280	-12,069	6,154	-5,900	-3,716	-2,877	23,260	-460	-421	-199	284,902
Net since 2006/2007	576	-5,697	-18,399	-17,047	-99,856	-100,684	-46,890	3,588	187,831	100,327	1,149	-3,858	-1,040	2,785,876

Note: The 2015/2016 estimates are preliminary.

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program, CANSIM table 051-0018.

Figure 1
Net interprovincial migration rate of provinces and territories, Canada, 2012/2013 to 2015/2016

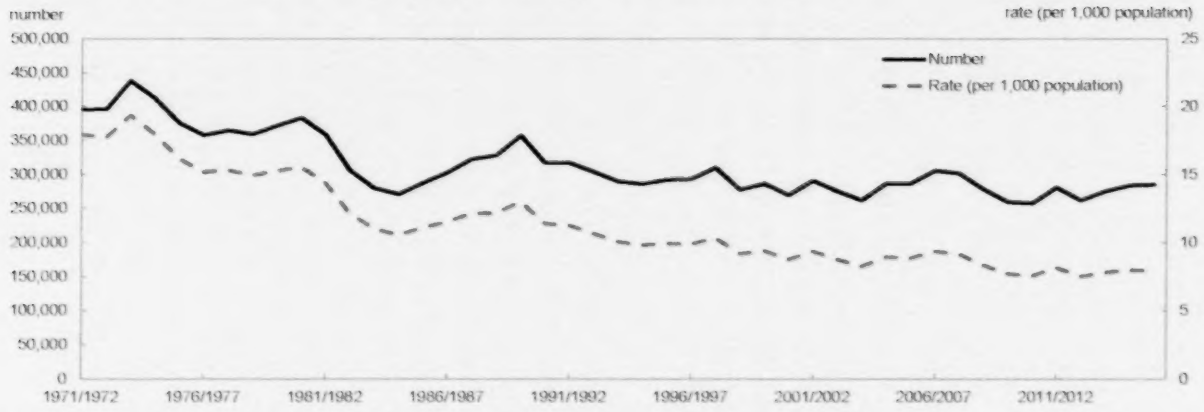
Notes: The net rate of a province corresponds to its net interprovincial migration divided by its average population during the reference period. The 2015/2016 estimates are preliminary.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

In relative terms, Prince Edward Island (-4.7 per thousand), Nova Scotia (-2.4 per thousand) and New Brunswick (-3.7 per thousand) had negative net interprovincial migration rates in 2014/2015. However, the losses posted by these Atlantic provinces have gradually diminished, since their respective rates were lower during both the 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 periods. Manitoba (-5.2 per thousand) and Saskatchewan (-4.0 per thousand) also had substantial migratory losses in 2014/2015. For Saskatchewan, this was a shift since 2012/2013, when its migratory exchanges were positive (0.4 per thousand). Finally, the Northwest Territories (-5.1 per thousand) and Nunavut (-4.7 per thousand) also had negative net rates in 2014/2015. However, these territories exhibit significant random fluctuations because of their small populations.

In 2014/2015, three provinces and one territory recorded positive net interprovincial migration. Between 2012/2013 and 2014/2015, net interprovincial migration in Alberta declined, going from 38,600 migrants (+9.8 per thousand) to 21,600 migrants (+5.2 per thousand). Despite this decrease, Alberta had the largest net number and rate of any province or territory in Canada in 2014/2015. In British Columbia, the interprovincial migration picture changed completely from 2012/2013 to 2014/2015. Whereas the province's net interprovincial migration was -1,900 in 2012/2013, it rose to 20,400 two years later. These numbers corresponded to rates of -0.4 per thousand and 4.4 per thousand. In 2014/2015, Newfoundland and Labrador also posted a positive net interprovincial migration rate (+0.3 per thousand). Of the territories, Yukon was the only one to register a positive rate in 2014/2015, at 2.3 per thousand.

In relation to the other periods included in the historical series that began in 1971/1972 (start of the Population Estimates Program), the annual numbers of interprovincial migrants in recent years are among the lowest on record. The maximum was reached in 1973/1974, with a total of 437,500 interprovincial migrants throughout Canada. Since that time, the annual number of interprovincial migrants has declined by one-third and the corresponding rate has fallen by more than half (Figure 2).

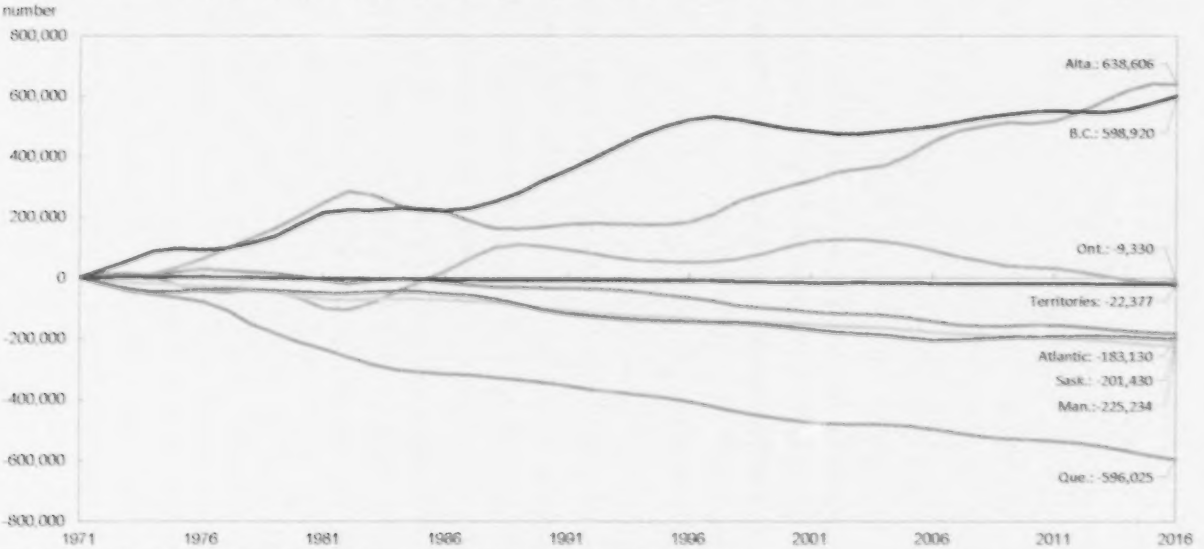
Figure 2
Number and rate of interprovincial migrants, Canada, 1971/1972 to 2015/2016



Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

Since 1971, Alberta and British Columbia have by turns been the main beneficiaries of interprovincial migration, with cumulative gains of 638,600 and 598,900 people, respectively. During all the annual periods from 1996/1997 to 2014/2015, except for 2009/2010, Alberta had the largest net interprovincial migration of any of Canada's provinces and territories. Since 1971, Quebec has consistently recorded negative migration, resulting in a net loss of 596,000 people. Manitoba (-225,200), Saskatchewan (-201,400) and the Atlantic provinces (-183,100) have also accumulated significant migratory losses since 1971. Ontario, which annually has large number of in-migrants and out-migrants, has an almost zero cumulative balance (-9,300) (Figure 3).

Figure 3
Cumulative net interprovincial migration by region, Canada, 1971 to 2016



Note: To facilitate analysis, the four Atlantic provinces were combined, as were the three territories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

Flows of interprovincial migrants

Interprovincial migratory flows refer to the movement of individuals from one province or territory to another. The analysis of interprovincial migratory flows serves to describe the migratory dynamics between each province and territory (Table 2).

The largest migratory flows (the largest 20%) are shown in Figure 4, in which a different colour is assigned to each province and territory. Origins and destinations are represented by the circle's segments. Flows have the same colour as their origin, the width indicates their size and the arrow their direction.

In 2014/2015, 26,900 persons migrated from Alberta to British Columbia, the biggest flow between two Canadian provinces. The reverse flow, from British Columbia to Alberta, was 21,200 persons (third biggest flow in Canada), resulting in a net flow of 5,700 persons in favour of British Columbia in the migratory exchanges between these two provinces.

Exchanges between the most populous province, Ontario, and the Western provinces were also among the main migratory flows between Canadian provinces. The flows from Ontario to Alberta (25,700) and British Columbia (17,900) were the second and fifth biggest flows in Canada, respectively. The reverse flows, from Alberta to Ontario (14,000) and from British Columbia to Ontario (11,300) were respectively the sixth and seventh biggest. Thus, Ontario had net losses in its migratory exchanges with those two provinces.

The main flow not involving the Western provinces was from Quebec to Ontario, with 18,800 persons (fourth biggest in Canada). The reverse flow, from Ontario to Quebec, involved 9,900 persons (eight biggest flow in Canada). The exchanges between these two provinces favoured Ontario by 8,900 persons.

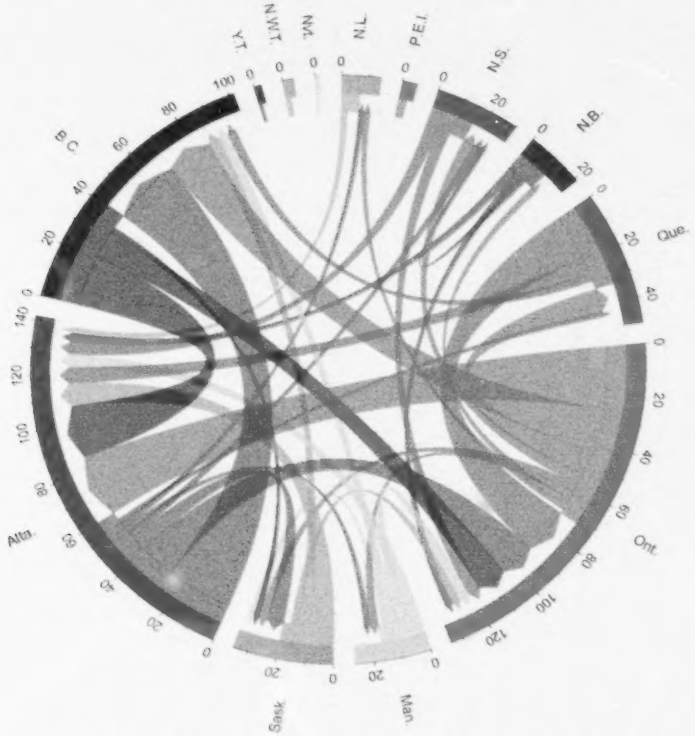
Table 2

Annual number of interprovincial migrants, Canada, 2014/2015

Origin	Destination												
	N.L.	P.E.I.	N.S.	N.B.	Que.	Ont.	Man.	Sask.	Alta.	B.C.	Y.T.	N.W.T.	Nvt.
	number												
Newfoundland and Labrador	...	72	982	383	186	1,895	97	141	2,433	512	9	67	74
Prince Edward Island	103	...	530	344	100	718	27	51	880	266	7	17	6
Nova Scotia	934	441	...	1,739	687	4,874	296	370	5,141	1,474	28	117	64
New Brunswick	325	365	2,110	...	1,276	3,001	206	229	3,470	881	14	77	20
Quebec	187	129	735	1,309	...	18,828	417	451	6,787	3,662	66	90	92
Ontario	2,295	683	4,788	2,734	9,909	...	3,317	3,335	25,660	17,905	243	411	289
Manitoba	158	43	360	184	364	4,298	...	1,933	5,253	3,943	46	63	55
Saskatchewan	138	54	274	186	256	3,163	1,705	...	9,510	4,438	46	87	17
Alberta	2,318	439	2,734	1,840	2,009	14,032	2,373	6,487	...	26,901	270	469	74
British Columbia	370	117	1,102	358	1,650	11,349	1,466	2,216	21,196	...	458	285	80
Yukon	11	6	41	15	48	133	19	38	307	587	...	53	3
Northwest Territories	76	12	112	45	50	247	61	76	828	367	140	...	30
Nunavut	97	6	86	47	76	336	38	19	75	90	21	85	...
Total in-migrants	7,012	2,367	13,854	9,184	16,611	62,874	10,022	15,346	81,540	61,026	1,348	1,821	804
Total out-migrants	6,851	3,049	16,165	11,974	32,753	71,569	16,700	19,874	59,946	40,647	1,261	2,044	976
Net migration	161	-682	-2,311	-2,790	-16,142	-8,695	-6,678	-4,528	21,594	20,379	87	-223	-172

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program, CANSIM table 051-0019.

Figure 4
Largest interprovincial migration flows, by region of origin and destination, Canada, 2014/2015



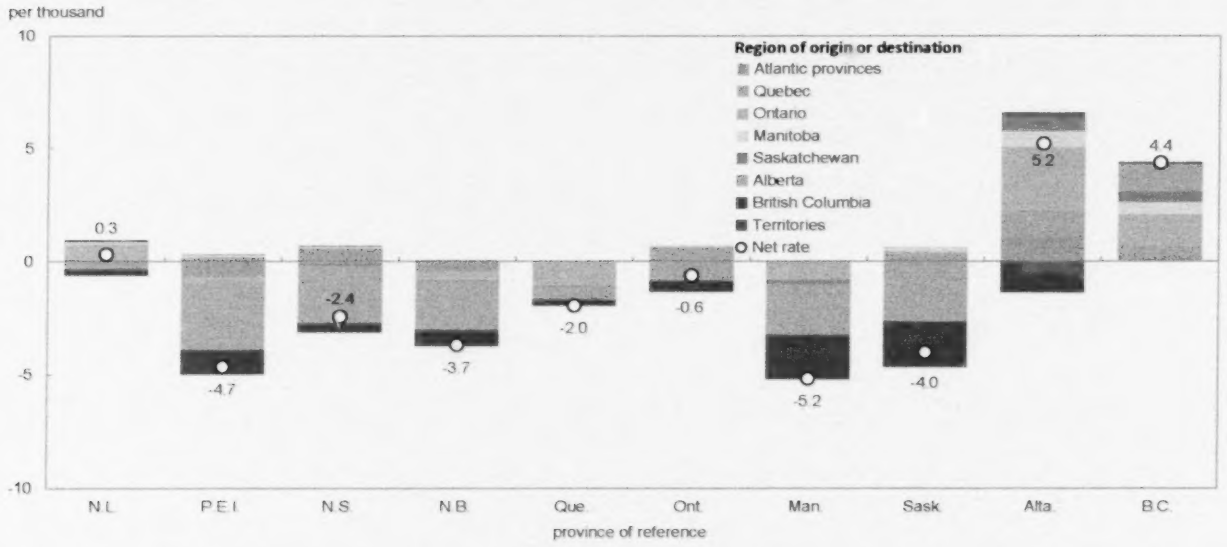
Notes: Origins and destinations are represented by the circle's segments. Each province or territory is assigned a colour. Flows have the same colour as their origin, the width indicates their size and the arrow their direction. Indicates the absolute number (in thousands) of interprovincial in-migrants and out-migrants. The most important flows (20%) are shown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program, CANSIM table 051-0019.

Another way to show the migratory relationships among the provinces and the territories is to break down the net migration rate of each reference province in 2014/2015 (as shown in Figure 1) by province or territory of origin or destination (Figure 5). This way of presenting the information makes it possible to analyze the relationships among the provinces while considering the impact of these flows in relation to the size of the province or territory. For example, much of Ontario's negative balance is explained by negative exchanges with Alberta (-0.8 per thousand). From the standpoint of Alberta, the arrival of these migrants from Ontario has an even greater impact, considering Alberta's smaller population (+2.8 per thousand).

Also, the Atlantic provinces had a strongly negative net migration rate to Alberta. Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick all had net migration rates to Alberta below -2 per thousand. On the other hand, even when all the Atlantic provinces are taken together, from the standpoint of Alberta, the net rate is more moderate (+1.1 per thousand). It should be noted that Nova Scotia's migratory loss was offset by positive migratory exchanges with Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick.

Relative to the size of their population, Manitoba and Saskatchewan also had considerable migratory losses to Alberta and British Columbia. Manitoba's net interprovincial migration rates to Alberta and British Columbia were -2.2 per thousand and -1.9 per thousand, respectively. Saskatchewan's net migration rates were -2.7 per thousand to Alberta and -2.0 per thousand to British Columbia. On the other hand, the impact of these exchanges for Alberta and British Columbia was smaller, with net rates between 0.5 per thousand and 0.7 per thousand.

Figure 5
Net interprovincial migration rates, by province of reference and regions of origin or destination, Canada, 2014/2015



Notes: To have a scale that provides information on interprovincial variations, the territories are not displayed as provinces of reference. Also, the four Atlantic provinces were combined as regions of origin or destination, as were the three territories.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

British Columbia was the only province whose migratory exchanges with the other provinces and territories were all positive. Conversely, Quebec was the only province whose migratory exchanges with the other provinces and territories were all negative. However, the relative impact of these exchanges on the total population were greater for British Columbia (+4.4 per thousand) than for Quebec (-2.0 per thousand).

In summary, even though the Western provinces have a smaller demographic weight than the central provinces, the flows involving them are quite large. The main population movements are those from the central and Eastern provinces to the Western provinces and those among the Western provinces.

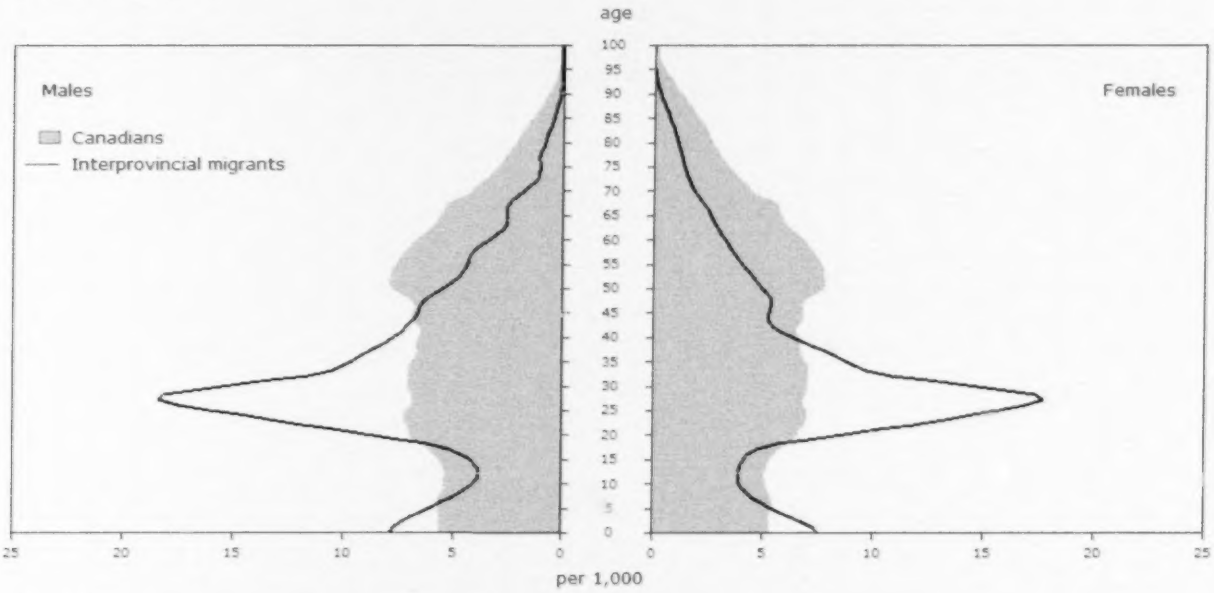
Age and sex structure of migrants

The age and sex structure of migrants differs from that of Canadians as a whole. From 2012/2013 to 2014/2015, just over half of interprovincial migrants were male, and this proportion was very stable from the one year to the next (51.3%, 51.4% and 51,3%). Also, in 2014/2015, a majority of migrants were aged 15 to 39 (54.2%), followed by those aged 40 to 64 (23.7%). Nearly one migrant in five (15.8%) was a child between 0 and 14 years of age and only 6.3% were aged 65 and over.

A comparison of the age pyramid of interprovincial migrants and that of Canadians overall, shown in relative values, clearly indicates the sizable differences in behaviour by age. Young adults and their young children make up the largest share of migrants. More specifically, internal mobility is greater among individuals aged 0 to 5 and 19 to 41, as shown by the points on the age pyramid. The 25-to-29 age group is the most mobile, accounting for 17.1% of interprovincial migrants whereas they represent only 6.9% of the total population. The largest difference between the two distributions is at age 27. Although they represent 1.3% of the population, people aged 27 constitute 3.6% of migrants. Their net interprovincial migration rate is 21.3 per thousand, compared to 8.0 per thousand for Canadians overall (Figure 6).

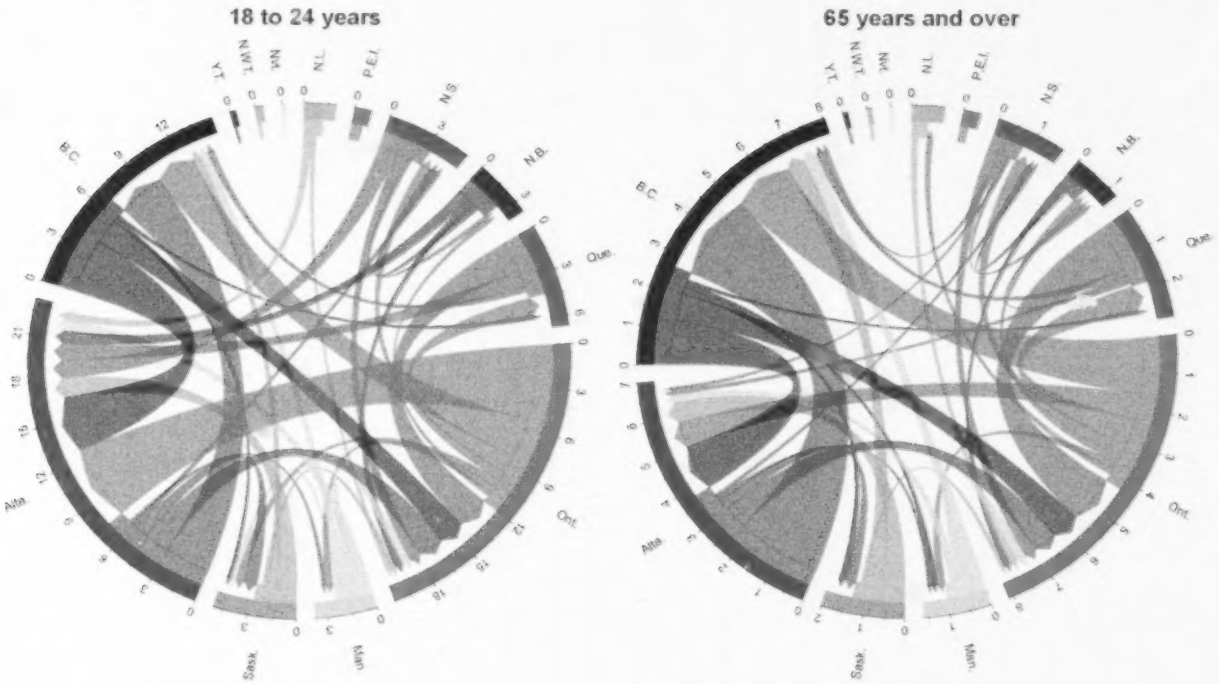
Figure 6

Age pyramid of interprovincial migrants and Canadians as a whole (per 1,000 population), by sex, Canada, 2014/2015



Note: Persons aged 100 and over are included at age 100.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

Figure 7
Largest interprovincial migration flows, by region of origin and destination, migrants aged 18 to 24 and aged 65 and over, Canada, 2014/2015



Notes: Origins and destinations are represented by the circle's segments. Each province or territory is assigned a colour. Flows have the same colour as their origin, the width indicates their size and the arrow their direction. indicates the absolute number (in thousands) of interprovincial in-migrants and out-migrants. The most important flows (20%) are shown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

The circular figures (Figure 7) show the largest interprovincial migratory flows (20%) in 2014/2015, illustrating the migratory dynamics by age. The differences between the migratory flows of people aged 18 to 24 and those aged 65 and over were pronounced. Alberta exerted a greater pull for people aged 18 to 24 than for those aged 65 and over. Even though the figure shows only the largest flows, it displays most of the flows to Alberta from the other provinces. The two largest flows were from Ontario and British Columbia. In the 65 and over age group, British Columbia was the province that attracted the most migrants. The largest flows were from Alberta and Ontario.

For more information, see CANSIM table 051-0012: Interprovincial migrants, by age group and sex, Canada, provinces and territories annual (persons).

Internal migration between census metropolitan areas (CMAs)

The section analyzes internal migration in Canada at the CMA level. Canada has 34 CMAs,[1] as well as 13 areas representing the non-CMA part of each province and territory. At the CMA level, 760,000 people engaged in internal migration in 2012/2013 (21.7 per thousand), compared to 792,100 in 2013/2014 (22.4 per thousand). In 2013/2014, approximately one-third of these migrants (34.7%) had changed province or territory, whereas two-thirds (65.3%) had engaged in intraprovincial migration, moving from one CMA to another within the same province, including the non-CMA areas. In 2012/2013, the distribution was similar, with 34.4% interprovincial migrants and 65.6% intraprovincial migrants.

From one CMA to another, net internal migration varies considerably. In 2013/2014, it was positive for 22 CMAs and negative for 12 CMAs. This imbalance is due in part to the fact that for non-CMA areas overall, the figure was negative (-8,000). It is also attributable in part to the Toronto CMA, which had the lowest net internal migration of all CMAs (-27,700) (Table 3). By comparison, the highest internal net migration was recorded in the Edmonton CMA (+19,200). In 2012/2013 too, the Toronto and Edmonton CMAs (at -25,800 and +17,100 respectively) ranked lowest and highest.

Table 3

Net interprovincial and intraprovincial migration (number and rate) by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2012/2013 and 2013/2014

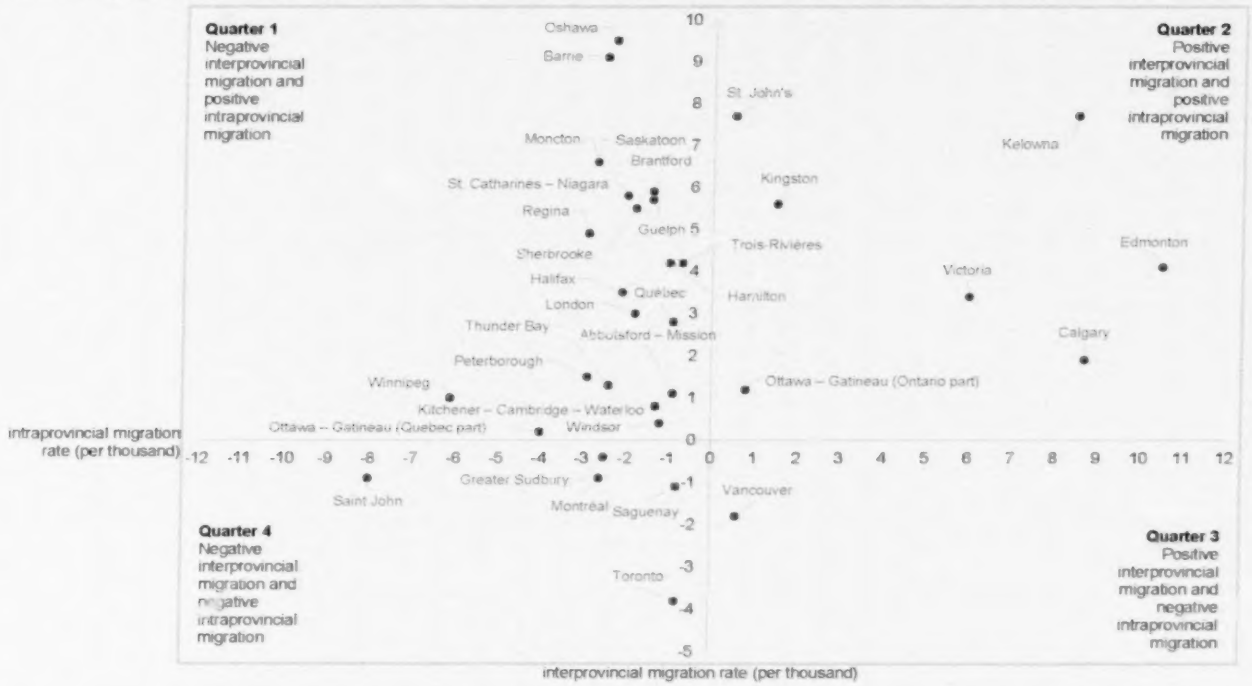
Census metropolitan area	2012/2013						2013/2014					
	Interprovincial		Intraprovincial		Internal		Interprovincial		Intraprovincial		Internal	
	number	rate[1]	number	rate[1]	number	rate[1]	number	rate[1]	number	rate[1]	number	rate[1]
St. John's	381	1.8	1,644	7.9	2,025	9.8	101	0.5	1,624	7.7	1,725	8.2
Halifax	-754	-1.8	1,420	3.5	666	1.6	-875	-2.1	1,452	3.5	577	1.4
Moncton	-293	-2.0	933	6.5	640	4.5	-399	-2.7	956	6.6	557	3.8
Saint John	-1,058	-8.2	5	0.0	-1,053	-8.2	-1,017	-8.0	-119	-0.9	-1,136	-8.9
Saguenay	-36	-0.2	-84	-0.5	-120	-0.7	-131	-0.8	-176	-1.1	-307	-1.9
Québec	-712	-0.9	2,884	3.7	2,172	2.8	-740	-0.9	2,207	2.8	1,467	1.8
Sherbrooke	-321	-1.5	1,065	5.1	744	3.6	-371	-1.8	1,158	5.5	787	3.7
Trois-Rivières	-107	-0.7	533	3.4	426	2.8	-104	-0.7	648	4.2	544	3.5
Montréal	-7,776	-2.0	-7,057	-1.8	-14,833	-3.7	-10,384	-2.6	-3,616	-0.9	-14,000	-3.5
Ottawa - Gatineau (Quebec part)	-920	-2.8	-135	-0.4	-1,055	-3.3	-1,300	-4.0	53	0.2	-1,247	-3.8
Ottawa - Gatineau (Ontario part)	617	0.6	958	1.0	1,575	1.6	780	0.8	1,159	1.2	1,939	2.0
Kingston	258	1.5	545	3.3	803	4.8	258	1.5	938	5.6	1,196	7.1
Peterborough	-327	-2.7	629	5.1	302	2.5	-361	-2.9	186	1.5	-175	-1.4
Oshawa	-565	-1.5	3,694	9.8	3,129	8.3	-867	-2.3	3,631	9.5	2,764	7.2
Toronto	-4,662	-0.8	-21,095	-3.6	-25,757	-4.4	-4,964	-0.8	-22,751	-3.8	-27,715	-4.6
Hamilton	-867	-1.1	3,117	4.1	2,250	3.0	-789	-1.0	3,219	4.2	2,430	3.2
St. Catharines - Niagara	-858	-2.1	1,584	3.9	726	1.8	-792	-2.0	2,354	5.8	1,562	3.8
Kitchener - Cambridge - Waterloo	-600	-1.2	-19	0.0	-619	-1.2	-659	-1.3	423	0.8	-236	-0.5
Brantford	-73	-0.5	940	6.7	867	6.1	-206	-1.4	842	5.9	636	4.5
Guelph	-146	-1.0	441	3.0	295	2.0	-216	-1.4	858	5.7	642	4.3
London	-1,080	-2.2	1,288	2.6	208	0.4	-877	-1.8	1,510	3.0	633	1.3
Windsor	-333	-1.0	190	0.6	-143	-0.4	-408	-1.2	130	0.4	-278	-0.8
Barrie	-579	-2.9	2,044	10.4	1,465	7.4	-492	-2.5	1,820	9.1	1,328	6.7
Greater Sudbury	-279	-1.7	248	1.5	-31	-0.2	-409	-2.5	-72	-0.4	-481	-2.9
Thunder Bay	-247	-2.0	277	2.2	30	0.2	-296	-2.4	168	1.3	-128	-1.0
Winnipeg	-3,208	-4.2	-142	-0.2	-3,350	-4.4	-4,764	-6.1	764	1.0	-4,000	-5.2
Regina	-76	-0.3	646	2.8	570	2.5	-669	-2.9	1,139	4.9	470	2.0
Saskatoon	-46	-0.2	2,114	7.4	2,068	7.2	-805	-2.7	1,941	6.6	1,136	3.9
Calgary	13,644	10.2	2,855	2.1	16,499	12.4	11,998	8.7	2,619	1.9	14,617	10.6
Edmonton	13,116	10.4	3,935	3.1	17,051	13.5	13,774	10.5	5,385	4.1	19,159	14.6
Kelowna	471	2.5	1,464	7.8	1,935	10.4	1,612	8.5	1,456	7.7	3,068	16.2
Abbotsford - Mission	-455	-2.6	157	0.9	-298	-1.7	-157	-0.9	190	1.1	33	0.2
Vancouver	-2,516	-1.0	-3,457	-1.4	-5,973	-2.5	1,490	0.6	-4,395	-1.8	-2,905	-1.2
Victoria	916	2.6	1,242	3.5	2,158	6.1	2,149	6.0	1,207	3.4	3,356	9.3

1. Rates are per thousand people.

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

1. The Ottawa – Gatineau CMA is divided in two to distinguish the Quebec part from the Ontario part.

Figure 8
Net interprovincial and intraprovincial migration rates, by census metropolitan area, Canada, 2013/2014



Note: The census metropolitan areas above the diagonal line have a positive net internal migration and those below have a negative net internal migration.
Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

Most CMAs (21 of 34) posted losses in interprovincial migration as well as gains in intraprovincial migration (Figure 8, quadrant 1), meaning that more people left those CMAs for other provinces than the opposite, while more people moved to those CMAs from other areas of the same province than the opposite. Also, the intensity of intraprovincial migration is generally greater than that of interprovincial migration. In particular, this was the case with the Oshawa and Barrie CMAs in Ontario, whose net interprovincial migration rates were respectively -2.3 per thousand and -2.5 per thousand, but whose net intraprovincial migration rates were the highest in Canada (+9.5 per thousand and +9.1 per thousand, respectively). Conversely, some CMAs had slightly positive net intraprovincial migration but significantly negative net interprovincial migration, resulting in negative net internal migration. This was especially the case with Winnipeg and the Quebec part of Ottawa – Gatineau, where the net interprovincial migration rates were respectively -6.1 per thousand and -4.0 per thousand.

Four CMAs in Western Canada stood out with especially high net internal migration rates: Kelowna (+16.2 per thousand), Edmonton (+14.6 per thousand), Calgary (+10.6 per thousand) and Victoria (+9.3 per thousand). These CMAs were characterized by positive intraprovincial migration, but also by highly positive rates of interprovincial migration (Figure 8, quadrant 2). In fact, of Canada's 34 CMAs, these four, along with the Kingston CMA, were the only ones to register a net interprovincial migration rate exceeding 1 per thousand. Meanwhile, 21 CMAs registered a net interprovincial migration rate of -1 per thousand or lower. This asymmetry is consistent with the situation at the provincial level, in that net internal migration for the majority of provinces is negative, primarily to the benefit of two provinces: Alberta and British Columbia.

Vancouver was the only CMA in Canada to register negative intraprovincial migration and positive interprovincial migration (Figure 8, quadrant 3). This CMA's net internal migration rate was negative (-1.2 per thousand).

Five CMAs had negative net interprovincial and intraprovincial migration rates (Figure 8, quadrant 4). Three of them stood out for having an especially low net interprovincial migration rate: Saint John (-8.0 per thousand), Montréal (-2.6 per thousand) and Greater Sudbury (-2.5 per thousand). In the Toronto CMA, the net interprovincial migration rate was marginally negative (-0.8 per thousand) but the net intraprovincial migration rate was the lowest in Canada (-3.8 per thousand).

In Ontario, 13 of the 15 CMAs had positive net intraprovincial migration rates in 2013/2014. This was due to the intensity of exchanges between the Toronto CMA and the province's other CMAs. Of the 10 biggest migratory flows in Canada expressed in net rates, six were flows from the Toronto CMA to other surrounding Ontario CMAs: Oshawa, Barrie, Guelph, Hamilton, St. Catharines – Niagara and Brantford (Table 4). The British Columbia CMAs exhibited a similar dynamic, with Kelowna and Abbotsford – Mission registering significant gains due to migration from Vancouver.

Table 4
Main origin-destination flows between census metropolitan areas, Canada, 2013/2014 (net number and rate)

CMA of origin	CMA of destination	Net	Rate
		number	per thousand
Toronto	Oshawa	5,404	14.2
Toronto	Barrie	2,595	13.0
Toronto	Guelph	1,091	7.3
Toronto	Hamilton	4,985	6.5
Vancouver	Abbotsford – Mission	656	3.6
Toronto	St. Catharines – Niagara	1,326	3.3
Toronto	Edmonton	3,336	2.5
Toronto	Brantford	341	2.4
Hamilton	Brantford	332	2.3
Vancouver	Kelowna	430	2.3

Note: The net rate corresponds to the net migration between both census metropolitan areas (CMA), divided by the average population of the destination CMA during the period.

Source: Statistics Canada, Demography Division, Population Estimates Program.

In addition to migration between two CMAs, many exchanges took place between CMAs and non-CMA areas. For example, in the Atlantic provinces, three CMAs in four (Saint John's, Moncton and Halifax) had a positive net internal migration rate despite a negative or neutral net interprovincial migration rate, since the latter was offset by migration from non-CMA areas. In Alberta, the Calgary and Edmonton CMAs had positive intraprovincial migration, which was also the result of gains from the non-CMA portion of their province. At the same time, the non-CMA portion of Alberta was notable for its strongly positive net interprovincial migration rate (+7.0 per thousand).

Overview of the 2015/2016 period

The preliminary estimates for the 2015/2016 period that were released in September 2016 indicated a slight increase in interprovincial migration in Canada, with a total of 284,900 migrants (Figure 1 and Table 1). However, the corresponding rate, 7.9 per thousand, was slightly down from 8.0 per thousand of 2014/2015, due to the increase in Canada's population between these two periods. Alberta, whose net interprovincial migration in 2014/2015 was the highest of any Canadian province (+21,600), had a net loss in 2015/2016 (-2,900). This 24,500 persons difference between the two annual figures is the largest drop for a Canadian province since Ontario went from a net flow of 35,200 persons in 1987/1988 to 9,700 persons in 1988/1989.

Between 2014/2015 and 2015/2016, Ontario's situation was the opposite of Alberta's, since it went from a net loss (-8,700) to a net gain (+6,200). For Ontario, this was the first net gain since 2002/2003. Only two other provinces or territories had positive net interprovincial migration in 2015/2016: British Columbia (+23,300) and Newfoundland and Labrador (+300). In Nova Scotia, the net interprovincial migration rate rose from -2.4 per thousand in 2014/2015 to -1.1 per thousand in 2015/2016, the strongest rate increase for any Canadian province or territory between these two periods.

Summary

Internal migration is an especially important component of population growth in Western Canada. Whether at the provincial level or the CMA level, Alberta and British Columbia have been the main beneficiaries of this, both historically and in the recent past. In 2013/2014, some of the CMAs in these provinces had very high net internal migration (notably Kelowna, Edmonton, Calgary and Victoria). The non-CMA areas of these provinces also had net gains. However, given the correlation between internal migration and economic conditions, the rise in the unemployment rate since 2015 in Alberta[2] could affect the dynamics of future internal migration throughout Canada. Indeed, preliminary estimates for 2015/2016 showed that for the first time since 2009, Alberta had negative net interprovincial migration.

In 2014/2015, the Atlantic provinces, especially Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick, registered losses related to interprovincial migration. The losses for Saint John (N.B.) and the non-CMA areas of the Atlantic provinces in 2013/2014 were increased by intraprovincial migration to the Saint John's (N.L.), Moncton and Halifax CMAs.

Movements from Canada's largest CMAs to other CMAs nearby were also a major phenomenon. In relative terms expressed as rates, the biggest flows from one CMA to another in 2013/2014 were those from Toronto and Vancouver to the smaller CMAs in their respective provinces.

Bibliography

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2. For more information, please see CANSIM Table 282-0087 (http://www5.statcan.gc.ca/cansim/a26?id=2820087&pattern=&p2=50&stByVal=1&p1=1&tabMode=dataTable&csid=&retrLang=eng&lang=eng).